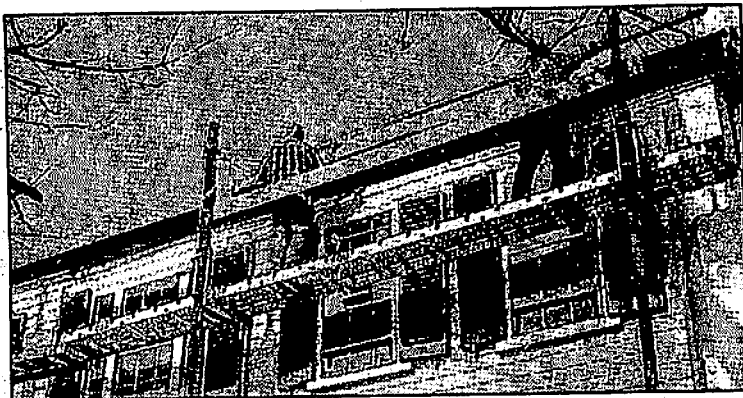


Restoration of King Caesar House

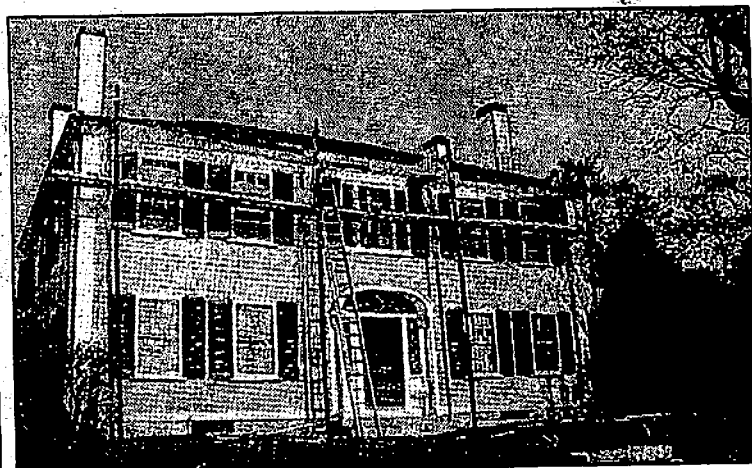
Since 2002 the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society has been conducting restoration projects on its buildings in connection with its "Keeping the Promise" capital campaign. According to the society's director, Patrick Browne, "We are now in the middle of some of the most ambitious projects on our agenda. The focus right now is on the King Caesar House."

Begun in July, the King Caesar House projects consist primarily of the following: New cedar roofing to the house, barn and cottage; new gutters and roofline molding on the main house; and new cedar siding in many places, especially the barn.

This work has been made possible by the Duxbury Community Preservation Fund, which has supported the roofing, and the many donors who contributed to the Society's "Keeping the Promise" campaign. The above tasks are now more than half finished. The roofing, gut-



Restoration of the roof and woodwork on the King Caesar House.



The intricate molding along the roofline has been disassembled and rotten components replaced according to original form.

"From a preservation perspective," says Browne, "the work at the King Caesar House has been challenging. We are fortunate to have professional craftsmen and contractors on our buildings committee who have been closely involved in the details of the project. Also, roofing contractor Paul Devlin, and carpenter for the molding project Peter Collins, are experienced in working with historic houses and sensitive to historic preservation."

The restoration of the gutters and roofline molding has been a larger task than the Society initially expected. The wooden gutters were known to be rotten and in need of replacement. Having new gutters milled to duplicate the original was overseen by Buildings Committee chair Jim Hartford.

In 1808, with no shortage of timber or craftsmen, King Caesar had gutters and molding made that were large and detailed. The new gutters were milled on Cape Cod, featuring the exact same profile. The carpenter installing the new woodwork, Peter Collins, first took a look at the freshly milled gutters and proclaimed that he had not seen material of that sort put on a house in "a dog's age."

Once the removal of the original gutters began, there were some surprises. Water damage had spread to much of the roofline molding, fascia board and soffit. Similar damage was repaired on the Nathaniel Winsor, Jr. House in 2002. However, the woodwork there was largely an early 20th century replacement. On the King Caesar House the woodwork is original, except in a

few small places. It has been more difficult to replicate some of the details incorporated by ship's carpenters of 1808.

The molding on the King Caesar House is particularly ornate, perhaps the most ornate of any house in Duxbury. The most beautiful feature, a large rope molding that would be very difficult to reproduce, is fortunately in good condition and has been reused. Society Buildings Committee member and local boat-builder Jon Daley inspected the old carpentry and picked up on some unusual techniques used by the original carpenters which have been replicated in the restoration.

For example, the back of the fascia board includes molding along the bottom edge, completely covered when the fascia

is in place and seemingly without purpose. However, when the molding is assembled, this detail makes the seam between the fascia and soffit almost invisible from the ground. Another interesting trait is the joining of the fascia nailer (the board to which all this molding is ultimately attached) and the roof rafters – a notch similar to a huge dovetail, something that isn't seen today.

The Society is replicating all these details and the restored woodwork will be identical to that of King Caesar's time. As soon as the woodwork is in place, the roofing will resume.

Anyone interested in further information about the Society's restoration projects is encouraged to call 781-934-6106.